

FORT MONROE, QUARTERS NO. 1  
(DeRussy House, Building No. 1)  
Hampton  
Hampton County  
Virginia

HABS NO. VA-595-A

HABS  
VA

88-HAMP,  
8A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS  
VA  
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QUARTERS #1  
(DeRussy House) (Building No. 1)

HABS NO. VA-595-A

Location: 151 Bernard Road  
Fort Monroe  
Hampton, Virginia

Present Owner: United States Army

Present Occupant: General and Mrs. Wurman

Present Use: General Officer's Quarters

Significance: The DeRussy House was the first permanent officer's quarters constructed at the army post. Although built for the commanding officer, the fort construction engineer was the first occupant. Quarters #1 was the site of numerous strategy and defense meeting and has hosted numerous visiting dignitaries. Its proportions and detailing make the DeRussy House one of the most attractive buildings on post and the residence contributes to the definition of the Parade Ground.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date(s) of Erection: Main House, 1819; joined, 1829.
2. Original and subsequent owners: United States Army.
3. Original plans and construction: Earliest plans and elevations (1818) show a double-pile, two-story brick residence with flanking wings and a raised basement. Also shown are a one-story kitchen on a raised basement (sheltering the cistern and two outbuildings flanking a formal garden).
4. Alterations and additions: In 1829, the kitchen was connected to the house. In 1871, an octagonal sun room was created on the harden (west) side, on axis with the main entry. Two-story, wooden porches were added to the house and kitchen after 1871 and before 1890. The original slate roof was removed and replaced with asphalt shingles in 1958.

B. Historical Context:

Although Quarters #1 was constructed in 1819 as the commanding officer's quarters, it was first occupied by the Fort Monroe Construction Engineer, Colonel Gratiot. In 1831, the Quartermaster General ordered the engineers (including Gratiot) into the Tuileries (Buildings #17 and #18) and Quarters #1 became the residence of the commanding officer, General DeRussy, for whom the house is named. The house remained as the commanding officer's quarters until 1907 when the commanding general was relocated to the newly constructed Commander's home, Building #119. At that time Quarter #1 was divided into east and west apartments for bachelor junior officers. In 1942, Quarters #1 was renovated and became a general officer, single-family residence. From the start, visiting dignitaries were hosted at Quarters #1 and they include: Presidents Lincoln, Garfield, Hayes, and Arthur; King David Kalakaua of Hawaii; Marquis de Lafayette; Secretaries Chase and Stanton; General Grant, Lee McClellan, and Sherman.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Quarters #1 is the oldest non-fortification structure at Fort Monroe and provides a handsome example of a Federal-style residence with sensitively incorporated additions and alterations.
2. Condition of fabric: Materials of original house and kitchen (brick) remain stable and in good condition. Materials of porches (wood) have been replaced periodically, as needed for maintenance.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Double-pile, rectangular block with flanking wings and kitchen annex; 112'-6" (main house block, five bays) X 33'-11". Three stories (two stories atop raised basement); 38'-1" (does not include chimney height).

2. Foundation: Concrete and brick, 2' thick.
3. Walls: Flemish-bond brick walls, currently painted white; brick sills and jack arches around some windows.
4. Structural systems, framing; All original walls are solid brick and load-bearing. Floors are hardwood and supported by wood floor joists. Roof is supported by a mix of heavy and light timber framing.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The two-story, wooden porches added between 1871 and 1897 on the east facade of Quarters #1 are supported by rusticated brick piers on basement level, octagonal wood columns on first and second floors. Jigsaw balustrade runs between columns. The porch roof is tin and has a full entablature with dentils.
6. Chimneys: Quarters #1 has six chimneys: two brick, interior, end chimneys and one central brick chimney in the main block of the house. Both wings have one brick, interior, end chimney and the kitchen annex has one brick, interior, end chimney.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: There are four entrances on the basement level. All basement doors are raised-panel and wooden. There are five doors on the first floor. There All first-floor doors are raised-panel and wooden. There is one french window on the second floor, providing access to second-floor porch.
  - b. Windows and shutter: Basement windows are six-over-six light, double-hung sash with working wooden shutters. First-floor windows are two-over-two-light, double-hung sash with working wooden shutters. Second-floor windows are a mix: six-light french window; four-light fixed window; and two-over-two light, double-hung sash windows with working wooden shutters.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The slate covering the gable roof of Quarters #1 was replaced by asphalt shingles in 1958.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Quarters #1 has wooden cornice at the eaves.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Quarter #1 has a double-pile floor arrangement with identical room configurations on each floor.
2. Stairways: The staircase between the first and second floor is elliptical and echoed by an elliptical ceiling recess above the staircase. The staircase between the basement and first floor is straight and narrow and directly underneath the grander elliptical staircase.
3. Flooring: The original floors in Quarters #1 were hardwood on the first and second floor and brick in the basement. Over time, most of these floors have been covered by wall-to-wall carpet and linoleum.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: All walls and ceilings are plaster.
5. Decorative features and trim: All original rooms on first and second floors have cornices, picture moldings, chairrails and baseboards. Window surrounds have rope moldings which are barely visible having been painted repeatedly.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Situated on axis with the fort's east gate, Quarters #1 faces east-southeast. Although the land on Army posts are not divided into lots, the yard immediately around the house is irregularly shaped, bounded on the east by Bernard Road, the west by the Parade Ground, and on the north and south by two officers', multi-family

residences. Two large magnolias nearly conceal the east elevation.

2. Historic landscape design: Early maps (1818) show a formal parterre flanked by two identically shaped outbuildings behind Quarters #1. It is not known if this garden design was ever realized. Photographs from the 1890s show small magnolias and metal fence bounding the eastern edge of the yard along Bernard Road.
3. Outbuildings: No original outbuildings survive. Early maps (1818) show two large outbuildings on the west side of Quarters #1. It is not known if these were ever constructed, or if they were, when they were demolished.

#### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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